

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (previously presented) A computer system comprising:
a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium having a unique recording medium ID;
a verification server connected with the user computers via a network, the verification server including a user database provided with the unique recording medium IDs; and
at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content database associated therewith;

wherein the verification server comprises:

means for requiring the recording medium ID from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server and for verifying the request based on information recorded in the user database;

means for establishing communications between the user computers and the desired content server when the request is verified;

means for requesting user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer from the user computers and for transmitting the user status information to the desired content server; and

means for receiving information corresponding to the user status information from the content database of the desired content server and for transmitting content information from the desired content server to the user computers to thereby provide the content requested by the user computers and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

2. (previously presented) A computer system according

to Claim 1, wherein the user status information comprises at least one of a serial number and a version number of a program.

3. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein the user status information comprises data indicative of the completion status of a game played on the user computer.

4. (cancelled)

5. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein the content information transmitted to the user computer comprises data for upgrading at least one of the programs and data.

6. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein the content information transmitted to the user computer comprises data for debugging at least one of the programs and data.

7. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein:

the user computers further comprise means for supplying to the verification server the user status information.

8. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein:

the user computers each have unique device IDs;

the user database contains information relating to the device IDs; and

the verification server further comprises:

means for obtaining the device IDs from the user

computers when the user computers request the data from the desired content server; and

means for identifying the user computers based on the device IDs and the user information in the user database.

9. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein:

each user of each of the user computers has a unique user ID;

the user database contains information relating to the user IDs; and

the verification server further comprises:

means for obtaining the user IDs from the user computers when the user computers request the data from the desired content server; and

means for identifying the user based on the user ID and the user information in the user database.

10. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 1, wherein the verification server is connected, via a network, to at least one content server having digital content.

11. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 10, wherein the verification server further comprises:

means for performing verification of the recording medium based on the recording medium ID; and

means for determining whether or not to permit providing of the digital content from the content server to the user computer, based on the results of the verification.

12. (previously presented) A computer system comprising:
a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and

data;

a verification server connected with the user computers via a network; and

at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content database associated therewith;

wherein the user computers each comprise means for supplying to the verification server user status information representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer; and

the verification server comprises:

means for obtaining the user status information from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

means for preparing the requested data according to the user status information; and

means for transmitting the requested data to the user computers to thereby provide the data requested by the users and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

13. (original) A computer system according to Claim 12, wherein said requested data is data for updating at least one of programs and data stored in said recording medium.

14. (previously presented) A computer system according to Claim 12, further comprising at least one content server having digital content,

wherein the means for preparing the requested data comprises means for sending the user status information to the content server, and

wherein the content server comprises means for selecting

the digital content according to the user status information and transmitting the selected digital content to the verification server.

15. (previously presented) A computer system comprising:
a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data; and

a verification server connected with the user computers via a network, wherein:

each of the user computers has a unique device ID; and

the verification server comprises:

a user database provided with user status information corresponding to the device IDs;

means for requiring the device IDs from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

means for identifying the user computer based on the device ID and the user status information in the user database;

means for requesting user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and user computer from the user computer and for transmitting the user status information to the desired content server;

means for preparing the requested data according to the identified user computer and the user status information; and

means for transmitting the requested data to the user computers to thereby provide the data requested by the users and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

16. (previously presented) A computer system comprising:
a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded

with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data; and

a verification server connected with the user computers via a network, wherein:

each user of each of the user computers has a unique user ID; and

the verification server further comprises:

a user database provided with user status information corresponding to the user IDs;

means for requiring the user IDs from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

means for identifying the user based on the user ID and the user status information in the user database;

means for requesting user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer from the user computer and for transmitting the user status information to the desired content server;

means for preparing the requested data according to the identified user and the user status information; and

means for transmitting the requested data to the user computers to thereby provide the data requested by the users and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

17. (previously presented) A verification server capable of being connected, via a network, with a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with one or more recording media each having a unique recording medium ID, the verification server comprising:

a user database provided with user status information corresponding to the recording medium IDs;

means for requiring the recording medium IDs from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

means for identifying a given recording medium based on the recording medium ID and the user status information in the user database;

means for requesting user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording media and the user computer from the user computer and for transmitting the user status information to the desired content server;

means for preparing the requested data according to the identified recording medium and the user status information; and

means for transmitting the requested data to the user computers to thereby provide the data requested by the users and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

18. (canceled)

19. (previously presented) A method of operating a computer system comprising a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium having a unique recording medium ID, a verification server connected with the user computers via a network and including a user database provided with the unique recording medium IDs, and at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content database associated therewith, wherein the method comprises:

requiring the recording medium ID from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

verifying the request based on information recorded in the

user database;

establishing communications between the user computer and the desired content server when the request is verified;

requesting user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer from the user computer;

transmitting the user status information to the desired content server;

receiving information corresponding to the user status information from the content database of the desired content sever; and

transmitting content information from the desired content server to the user computer to thereby provide the content requested by the user computers and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

20. (previously presented) A method of operating a computer system comprising a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data, a verification server connected with the user computers via a network, and at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content database associated therewith, wherein the method comprises:

obtaining user status information from the user computer representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server connected to the verification server;

preparing the requested data according to the user status information; and

transmitting the requested data to the user computer to thereby provide the data requested by the users and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

21. (previously presented) A user computer capable of being loaded with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data, and capable of being connected with a verification server via a network, the verification server being connected at least one content server via a network and having a content database associated therewith, and the recording medium having a unique ID, the user computer comprising:

means for supplying at least one of an ID unique of the user computer, an ID unique of the recording medium and an ID unique of the user, to the verification server as verification information, when a request for data associated with a desired content server is made by a user;

means for supplying user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording medium and the user computer to the verification server;

means for receiving a result of verification from the verification server; and

means for receiving content information corresponding to the user status information from the desired content server and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

22. (previously presented) A storage medium for use with

a computer system, which computer system comprises a user computer connectable via a network to a server, a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data and being capable of being loaded into the user computer, a verification server connected with the user computer via a network, and at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content database associated therewith, wherein the storage medium contains a program capable of causing the user computer to:

- send the recording medium ID to the verification server when the user computer requests data associated with a desired content server;

- establish communications between the user computer and the desired content server via the verification server when the request is verified by the verification server;

- send user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording media and the user computer to the desired content server; and

- receive content information corresponding to the user status information from the desired content server in response to the request for data and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

23. (previously presented) A storage medium containing a program for use with a computer system, the computer system comprising a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium having a unique recording medium ID, a verification server connected with the user computers via a network and including a user database provided with the unique recording medium IDs, and at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and having a content

database associated therewith, wherein the program is capable of causing the verification server to:

- require the recording medium ID from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server;

- verify the request based on information recorded in the user database;

- establish communications between the user computer and the desired content server when the request is verified;

- request user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording media and the user computer from the user computer;

- transmit the user status information to the content server;

- receive information corresponding to the user status information from the desired content database; and

- transmit content information from the desired content server to the user computer to thereby provide the content requested by the user computers and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.

24. (previously presented) A storage medium containing a program for use with a computer system, the computer system comprising a plurality of user computers each capable of being loaded with a recording medium storing at least one of programs and data, a verification server connected with the user computers via a network and including a user database provided with unique information associated with at least one of an ID unique of the user computer, an ID unique of the recording medium and an ID unique of the user, and at least one content server connected to the verification server via a network and

having a content database associated therewith, wherein the program is capable of causing the verification server to:

- require verification information from the user computers when the user computers request data associated with a desired content server;

- verify the request based on information recorded in the user database;

- establish communications between the user computer and the desired content server when the request is verified;

- request user status information from the user computers representing data of partway-through games and data stored in at least one of the recording media and the user computer from the user computer;

- transmit the user status information to the desired content server;

- receive information corresponding to the user status information from the content database of the desired content server; and

- transmit content information from the desired content server to the user computer to thereby provide the content requested by the user computers and upgrading or debugging programs based on the user status information of individual user computers.